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BI-WEEKLY WARNING ISSUES

FOR THE DCI

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KEY WARNING ISSUE

IRAQ/IRAN: Saddam Hussein's Strategy

OTHER SIGNIFICANT WARNING ISSUES

USSR: Simmering Nationalities Troubles

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Prepared by NIO/Warning and Staff

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KEY WARNING ISSUE**IRAQ/IRAN: Saddam Hussein's Strategy**

The NIO for Warning believes that Iraqi leaders are stalling in opening talks, both to buy time for the army to accomplish its military objectives and because of their genuine suspicions about Iran's intentions. The continuing Iraqi military buildup and increased fighting in the far southern front suggest that President Saddam Husayn's goals still include occupation of both banks of the Shatt al-Arab.

The extent of coordination, scope and tempo of recent Iraqi attacks indicate that these operations were planned well before Iran's acceptance of UN Resolution 598. Iraq's minimum military objectives are to:

- o capture as many Iranian troops as

possible to equalize any future exchange of prisoners;

- o destroy as much of the Iranian armed forces as possible; and
- o weaken Iran's ability to wage war in the future.

The continuing build-up of Iraqi forces in the southern front region indicates that another major Iraqi offensive could well begin soon. Should Iraqi tactics prove as effective and Iranian defenses as weak in this area as they have elsewhere, Husayn might be tempted once again to occupy Khuzestan, and particularly the cities of Abadan and Khorramshahr which would give Iraq unimpeded access to the Persian Gulf.

OTHER SIGNIFICANT WARNING ISSUES**USSR: Simmering Nationalities Troubles**

Ethnic unrest in the Caucasus, in particular, promises to simmer indefinitely, posing a continuing challenge to the leadership and diverting its attention from other pressing matters. The government responded to strikes and the occupation of the Yerevan airport with an increased show of force-- including elements of at least two airborne divisions--and a rejection last week by the Supreme Soviet of a request by the ethnic Armenian residents of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan for unification with Armenia. The crackdown has not, however, addressed the entire issue of nationalities policy and a Central Committee plenum to discuss the matter apparently has been postponed as the

party wrestles with enacting the organizational changes called for by the recent party conference. The option of autonomy for Nagorno-Karabakh remains open, but the leadership apparently is still divided over how to proceed.

In the meantime, deep dissatisfaction in the Caucasus again could turn violent with little warning and dissident minorities in other regions, especially the Baltic states, will be watching eagerly the implications of Moscow's handling of the Armenian crisis for their own aspirations. Reactions to surprise verdicts in the ongoing trials of Azeris for murders of Armenians during riots earlier this year could be triggers. The leadership's man-

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agement of the outbursts has been collective, insulating Gorbachev from personal responsibility. Gorbachev's position is not immediately threatened,

but the unrest is damaging to him and could over time be used against him by conservative opponents, especially if violence again breaks out.

PANAMA: Chances of Spontaneous Violence Growing

There is a chance that spontaneous violence--triggered by either Panamanians or Americans--quickly could escalate the crisis beyond the control of either government. Outbursts by US citizens could be most explosive. If, for example, Panamanian troops carry through on threats to search the homes of the 1,130 American employees of the Panama Canal Commission for "contraband" goods from military exchanges, irate US citizens may respond with gunfire.

SOUTHCOM intends to protect US citizens, potentially leading to an unintended military confrontation. The continuing large number of US military personnel living off post--and lack of SOUTHCOM restrictions on their movements--make terrorist attacks on Americans easy. Continuing tensions will increase the chances of violence and make management of the crisis by US officials in Panama more difficult.

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SPECIAL WARNING TOPIC**WASTE DISPOSAL: A Looming North/South Issue**

The steady growth of production of toxic wastes in the industrialized world, combined with steadily diminishing abilities to handle the materials, is causing Western governments and corporations to look increasingly to the Third World for disposal sites. Transportation to less developed countries offers some advantages, but runs the risk of alienating host governments and reviving memories of colonialism. Western countries almost uniformly have not addressed the political ramifications of this growing problem of waste disposal.

Western interest in Third World disposal sites is fueled by the disappearance of suitable landfill sites, growing regulation borne of environmental concerns, and the rapidly rising costs of disposal that have reached \$2500 per ton. Already, major US cities like New York and Philadelphia have sought to export waste with varying degrees of success. The problem is complicated further when toxic and nuclear wastes are involved. In such a climate, the vast expanses of uninhabited, largely unregulated areas of the Third World--such as the desert of northwest Africa, for example-- increasingly appear attractive as disposal sites.

Disposal in these remote areas, if handled well, could offer significant advantages:

- o The industrialized economies get rid of their wastes.
- o Third World countries receive significant earnings--in some cases hundreds of millions of dollars per year are possible--that can reduce debt burdens and spur economic development.

- o The process of safely handling wastes could create jobs and generate needs for technical skills that, once owned by Third World personnel, could be employed elsewhere in their economies.

Many such waste disposal activities to date, however, have been irresponsible and have generated considerable animosity, particularly in Africa. Several European firms have been caught dumping untreated toxic wastes in West Africa and an Italian company improperly disposed of some 3,500 tons of waste in Nigeria, for example. Africans in some cases were bribed to permit the dumping. The Organization of African Unity in May discussed the issue, attesting to its growing concern. Worries include:

- o The fact that many of the wastes are very toxic, creating major environmental risks.
- o The appearance that the West, after exploiting the Third World's minerals, wants to return them as waste, adding insult to the injury of colonialism. Opponents of the West increasingly may play this propaganda theme.
- o Concern that people who revere the land for cultural and religious reasons resent pollution for more than the environmental reasons common in the West.

The United States thus far has largely escaped political recriminations for dumping hazardous waste--and won some kudos for helping to clean up--but the potential for unpleasant incidents

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seems certain to rise as waste problems mount and the amounts of money involved continue to grow. No country in the West has taken the lead to organize a waste disposal regime which could help all parties concerned and could ameliorate tensions between North and South. The issue already is spreading, as evidenced by a recent Kuwaiti recom-

mendation to Nigeria that it take legal action against Italy for its dumping, and is likely to continue to attract attention. Western governments' failure to act quickly in this potential new arena of international conflict could generate a backlash that might indefinitely preclude mutually advantageous waste disposal.

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